

## Prohibited Personnel Practices and Merit Principles Annual Reminder

Ethical decision making is a key to responsive and responsible management at NASA. Conscientious and principled decision making is a must for those NASA managers and others who exercise personnel authority (i.e., those who take, direct others to take, recommend, or approve any

personnel action). How can you ensure your personnel decisions are ethical? You can become familiar with and let the underlying core values embodied in the Prohibited Personnel Practices and the Merit Systems principles guide your personnel decisions. These complementary values provide the do's and don'ts for managers and supervisors.

### Prohibited Personnel Practices

#### Supervisors and Managers shall NOT:

**DISCRIMINATE** on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicapping condition, marital status, or political affiliation.

**SOLICIT** or **CONSIDER** any personnel recommendation or statement not based on personal knowledge or records of performance, ability, aptitude, general qualifications, character, loyalty, or suitability.

**COERCE** an employee's political activity.

**DECEIVE** or **OBSTRUCT** any person with respect to such person's right to compete for employment.

**INFLUENCE** a person to withdraw from competition for the purpose of improving or injuring the prospects of another person for employment.

**GRANT** any preference or advantage not authorized by law, regulation, or rule to any [employee or applicant for the purpose of improving or injuring the prospects of another person for employment].

**EMPLOY** or **ADVOCATE** a relative.

**RETALIATE** against a Whistleblower, whether an employee or an applicant.

**RETALIATE** against employees or applicants who exercise their appeal rights, testify, or cooperate with an Inspector General or the Special Counsel, or refuse to break the law.

**DISCRIMINATE** based on personal conduct which is not adverse to the on-the-job performance of an employee, applicant, or others.

**VIOLATE** any law, rule, or regulation implementing or directly concerning the merit principles.

**VIOLATE** Veteran's Preference by taking or failure to take a personnel action. (National Defense Authorization Act for FY97)

### Merit System Principles

#### Supervisors and Managers shall:

**RECRUIT** qualified individuals from all segments of society and select and advance employees on the basis of merit after fair and open competition.

**TREAT** employees and applicants fairly and equitably, without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicapping condition.

**PROVIDE** equal pay for equal work and reward excellent performance.

**MAINTAIN** high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.

**MANAGE** employees efficiently and effectively.

**RETAIN** and separate employees on the basis of their performance.

**EDUCATE** and train employees when it will result in better organizational or individual performance.

**PROTECT** employees from improper political influence.

**PROTECT** employees against reprisal for the lawful disclosure of information in "whistleblower" situations (i.e., protecting people who report things like illegal and/or wasteful activities).

Any questions concerning this notice, contact:  
**NSSC Customer Contact Center**  
1-877-NSSC123 or [nssc-contactcenter@nasa.gov](mailto:nssc-contactcenter@nasa.gov)